

Burnham welcomes plans for better deal for Greater Manchester's renters

Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham today welcomed proposals to address problems faced by people living in or trying to access private rented housing.

At the launch of the 'Plan for Better Renting in Greater Manchester' by Fair Housing Futures, the Mayor heard from the unique partnership of tenants, landlords, local authorities and advocacy organisations who have worked together to tackle it. The plan has been prepared following research and analysis from Fair Housing Futures, which is funded by the Nationwide Foundation and managed by Shelter.

Recommendations include the establishment of a Greater Manchester Housing Commission. Included in its scope will be exploration into innovative proposals to limit excess rent rises during the same tenancy and setting a consistent standard and guidance for landlords on charging rent.

Other proposals included in the plan include:

- An urgent implementation and no dilution of the Government's proposed Renters Reform Bill
- A Greater Manchester specific pilot of the 'Property Portal' with a register and accreditation of PRS landlords and greater devolved powers over selective licencing
- Urgent and practical reform of the Universal Credit system that hinders tenants and landlords from a better renting relationship
- Increases in Discretionary Housing Payments for Councils to support vulnerable tenants and an increase to Local Housing Allowance rates to better reflect market rents.
- GMCA to explore the options to bring in additional devolved investment for property improvements, building safety and energy efficiency.
- The Mayor's Good Landlord Charter should be renamed the 'Good Renting Charter' to improve partnerships and help relationships between landlords and tenants.

Andy Burnham said:

"I want to thank Fair Housing Futures for the extensive work they're doing to help us build a fairer, safer and more affordable private rented housing sector for people in our city-region.

"What is clear to everyone is that we are stronger when we work in partnership with different stakeholders towards a common goal. That's the approach we are taking in the development of our city-region's first ever Good Landlord Charter, so that we can drive up standards in the sector and deliver on our ambitions for more control over housing here in Greater Manchester.

"Now is the time for a united approach, together with Government, tenants and landlords, to tackle these issues once and for all."

Fay Selvan, Chair of the Fair Housing Futures Board said:

“This plan has been developed in partnership with landlords, tenants, local authorities and charities. We all recognise the huge challenges vulnerable people face in accessing good quality, affordable private rented properties in Greater Manchester and tackling these systemic obstacles must be a priority. The scale of the challenge cannot be underestimated.

“This plan seeks to address the unfairness in the system and empower people in the housing market, building partnerships with good landlords and agencies and working with the Mayor to secure devolved powers and influencing Government legislation to offer a better deal for renters.

“I’m delighted to have launched our plan today. Together we’ll help build a private rented sector that works for all.”

Samantha Stewart, Acting Chief Executive of the Nationwide Foundation, said:

“To combat the problems in the private rented sector, we need innovative ideas and collaboration between everyone involved. The plan launched today is the result of this approach across the Fair Housing Futures project, which we’re proud to fund and support.

“This plan sets out clearly what steps need to be taken at every level to transform the private rented sector in Greater Manchester. We’re excited to continue to support the project, and to see how everyone involved can continue to work together to build a private rented sector that works for all.”

The Plan for Better Renting in Greater Manchester is available here:

https://assets.ctfassets.net/6sxvmndn0s/3XPorqr0Hewhs5f28VbCK3/6fb8e32ee3572f5e3d0311c388d13d1f/Plan_for_better_renting_in_Greater_Manchester_final.pdf

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